



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Mukund Parikh,
Human Services Specialist 3
(PC0334A), Hudson County

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket No. 2019-3166

ISSUED: September 12, 2019 (RE)

Mukund Parikh appeals the determination of the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) which found that, per the substitution clause for education, he did not meet the experience requirements for the promotional examination for Human Services Specialist 3 (PC0334A), Hudson County.

The subject examination announcement was issued with a closing date of February 21, 2019, and was open to employees in the competitive division who had an aggregate of one year of continuous permanent service as of the closing date in the titles Human Services Specialist 2 or Human Services Specialist 2 Bilingual in Spanish and English, OR to employees in the competitive division who had an aggregate of one year of continuous permanent service as of the closing date in any competitive title and meet the announced requirements. Those requirements included sixty semester hour credits from an accredited college or university, and two years of experience involving any combination of the following: securing/verifying information and making determinations or recommendations relating to eligibility or qualifications of applicants for loans, insurance, credit, employability, and/or job training services, or entitlement to cash awards, financial benefits, or adjustment and settlement of insurance claims; investigations involving the collection of facts and information by observing conditions, examining records, interviewing individuals, and preparing investigative reports of findings; or investigating, establishing and/or enforcing support obligations in a welfare board or agency, court system, or related agency. and who met the announced requirements. Applicants who did not possess the required education could substitute experience as indicated on a year for year basis, with thirty semester

hour credits being equal to one year of experience. There are 123 admitted candidates, and the examination has not yet been held.

On his application, the appellant indicated that he possessed a Bachelor's degree from a university in India. The announcement indicated that foreign degrees/transcripts must be evaluated by a recognized evaluation service, and that failure to do so will result in rejection from the examination process. The appellant did not provide an evaluation of his foreign degree. Next, the appellant did not include experience on his application. The bottom of the application states, "During the application creation process, employment information was not entered into the experience section." Thus, the appellant was found to be lacking four years of applicable experience per the substitution clause for education.

On appeal, the appellant argues that he submitted a completed application, and he attached documents as proof. These documents included his CAMPS record, a copy of the notification of ineligibility, a copy of his application which included the note at the bottom that he had not entered employment information, and four screenshots. The first screen shot contains half of his application for promotional examination. The second, third and fourth screen shots each contain pieces of an application for promotional examination that had been completed but not submitted. That is, there were boxes for information and these boxes were completed, however, this was an unsubmitted application.

CONCLUSION

N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.6(a) provides that applicants shall meet all requirements specified in the promotional examination announcement by the closing date. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-2.1(f) provides that an application may be amended prior to the announced closing date.

The appellant was correctly denied admittance to the subject examination since he lacked the required amount of experience per the substitution clause for education. Specifically, the appellant did not provide a copy of his foreign degree evaluation with his application. Next, the second screen shot of the unsubmitted application indicates at the top that it was for the examination Human Services Specialist, 3 Bilingual in Spanish and English (PC0335A), Hudson County. The applicant identification has an X for the first five digits, and contains only the last four digits. Those digits do not match the appellant's applicant identification. A search of the database found 25 applicants with the same last four digits of those on the screen shot. One of those applicants has the same last name as the appellant and the same address. That individual partially completed an application for Human Services Specialist, 3 Bilingual in Spanish and English (PC0335A), Hudson County on February 25, 2019, but did not complete it, and did not submit it. It appears that the appellant took this application format and entered in his

information. For reasons unknown, he then completed his own application with a correct applicant identification number and with no employment information, and submitted it on the same day, February 15, 2019 later in the afternoon. The appellant cannot use an unsubmitted application with the applicant and identification number of another individual as proof that he submitted experience requirements, particularly when he submitted his own application with no employment information.

Aside from the fact that it is axiomatic that an applicant for a position should describe his or her experience in a manner that would demonstrate meeting the qualifications for a particular position, as well as the fact that it is an applicant's responsibility to do so, the Commission provides sufficient instructions to all applicants with respect to filling out examination applications. Instructions for completing the application state, "Carefully review your application to ensure that it is complete and accurate before submitting," and "You must complete your application in detail. Your score may be based on a comparison of your background with the job requirements. Failure to complete your application properly may cause you to be declared ineligible or may lower your score if your application is your test paper." Further, the applications states, "Employment Record: You may be declared ineligible or you may not receive proper credit for scoring purposes if you do not properly complete your application. If you held different positions with the same employer, list each position separately. Make sure you give full dates of employment (month/year), indicate whether the job was full or part time, and the number of hours worked per week. If you are currently employed in this position, enter the current month and year in the Employed To section. Since your application may be your only test paper, be sure it is complete and accurate. Failure to complete your application properly may cause you to be declared ineligible, lower your score, or possibly cause you to fail." The Online Application System User Guide asks candidates to review the application to make sure the information is complete and accurate. It also states that, by clicking "yes" to make a payment and submit the application, the candidate is told that he or she is certifying that the application is complete and accurate. Additionally, the Guide includes instructions on submitting additional information by mail. Although the appellant had a copy of his application which indicated that he provided no experience, he did not amend his application, or send additional information such as his resume and evaluation of foreign degree, by mail.

In accordance with *N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.1(f)*, information submitted on appeal pertaining to duties in a given title that expands or enlarges information previously submitted is considered clarifying and is accepted. However, any documentation indicating work in a setting that was not previously listed on an application or resume cannot be considered after the closing date. *See In the Matter of Diana Begley* (MSB, decided November 17, 2004). As such, any supplemental information received after the closing date and cannot be accepted. The examination is

competitive with 123 eligible candidates, so there would be no basis to relax this requirement in the instant matter. The appellant lacks four years of applicable experience per the substitution clause for education.

An independent review of all material presented indicates that the decision of the Agency Services, that the appellant did not meet the announced requirements for eligibility by the closing date, is amply supported by the record. The appellant provides no basis to disturb this decision. Thus, the appellant has failed to support his burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON
THE 10th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2019



Deirdré L. Webster Cobb
Chairperson
Civil Service Commission

Inquiries
and
Correspondence

Christopher S. Myers
Director
Division of Appeals and Regulatory Affairs
Civil Service Commission
Written Record Appeals Unit
P. O. Box 312
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0312

c: Mukund Parikh
Kelly Glenn
Records Center